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OCT 08 2008

Further, claim 5 recites that each bottom of the pair of concave parts is formed so as to be an inclined surface. Claim 5 further recites that the inclined surface is (i) formed so as to descend toward a front in the conveying direction, and (ii) formed so as to define upwardly-convex curved surface. This feature causes the snap ring to be guided gradually downwardly by the curved contact surface so that the transition of the snap ring, from the horizontal position to a vertical position, can be smoothly performed.

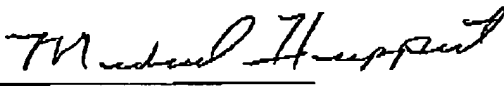
In contrast, the concave parts (22, 23) of JP '855 do not define an inclined surface that is upwardly convex. Thus, JP '855 does not disclose or suggest the concave portions recited in claim 5.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the present application is now clearly in condition for allowance. The Examiner therefore is requested to pass this case to issue.

In the event that the Examiner has any comments or suggestions of a nature necessary to place this case in condition for allowance, then the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney by telephone to promptly resolve any remaining matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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October 8, 2008